

1 John 2:1-11

New American Standard Version

1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you
 2 may not **sin**. And if anyone **sins** we have an Advocate with the
 3 Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ² and He Himself is the
 4 propitiation for our **sins** and not for ours only, but also for *those*
 5 *of the whole world*. ³ By this we know that we have come to
 6 know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ The one who says,
 7 “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His
 8 commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;⁵ but
 9 whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been
 10 perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: ⁶ the one who
 11 says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner
 12 as He walked. ⁷ Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment
 13 to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the
 14 beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have
 15 heard. ⁸ On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to
 16 you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is
 17 passing away and the true Light is already shining. ⁹ The one
 18 who says he is in the Light and *yet* hates his brother is in the
 19 darkness until now. ¹⁰ The one who loves his brother abides in
 20 the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. ¹¹ But the
 21 one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the
 22 darkness, and does not know where he is going because the
 23 darkness has blinded his eyes.

Observation (What does it say?):

What do you notice in this passage?

- What does John say about a reason for writing?
- Circle repeated words.
- Underline contrasting words or ideas.

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage:

- How do you think this passage might relate to 1 John 1:6-2:1 from last week?
- What “commandments” do you think he means? The Ten Commandments? Commandments and rules in general? Something else? What does he mean about “old” and “new”?
- How do the repetitions and the contrasts help understand the passage? Or do they? How do they relate to the reason he gave for writing?
- Do you think John is turning back to legalism and rule-keeping? Why is he so emphatic about sin and commandments? How does this relate to what he said earlier (e.g., 1 John 1:3-4)?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- Which of the images in this passage is most helpful to you “that you may not sin”? How? Why?

Additional questions for thought and discussion:

- *What does it mean that the Advocate (Jesus) is the propitiation for the sins of the “whole world” (v. 2)? How would you respond to someone took this to mean that everyone is already saved?*
- *Why is John so adamant about obedience and commandments and keeping His word? What about God’s grace?*
- *How far (if at all) should we take a passage like this in deciding who is and who is not a genuine Christian? How should we use this passage in evaluating our own lives?*

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

Observation
(What does it say?)

*What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer’s thought process?*

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose (“in order that...”)?
- Are there conclusions (“Therefore...”)?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good “headline” for the passage?

Interpretation
(What does it mean?)

*What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?*

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer’s thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Application
(What does it mean for me?)

*What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?*

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)